

MINUTES
MAG REGIONAL CONCEPT OF TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS
STAKEHOLDER GROUP MEETING No. 4

December 4, 2002
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM
Maricopa Association of Governments
302 N First Avenue, Suite 300
Phoenix, Arizona

ATTENDANCE

Bruce Dressel, City of Scottsdale
Jim Decker, City of Tempe
Xiao Qin, MAG
Bruce Ward, Town of Gilbert
Sarath Joshua, MAG
Jimmie Dickson, City of Glendale
Mike Mah, City of Chandler

Yogesh Mantri, MCDOT
Robert Maki, City of Surprise
Tami deRuiter, City of Phoenix
Scott Nodes, City of Peoria
Jim Bloomer, City of Mesa
Marian Thompson, ADOT
Mike Nevarez, Phoenix Public Transit

PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS PRESENT

Pierre Pretorius, Kimley-Horn & Associates
Brent Crowther, Kimley-Horn & Associates
Erin Ehlinger, PB Farradyne
Pat Fuller, PB Farradyne

MINUTES

1. Project Introduction and Welcome
Pierre Pretorius noted that the project is on schedule. He then asked for comments on the notes of the November meeting. None were received. The minutes were approved.
2. Discussion Items
Erin Ehlinger began with an overview of the contents of Tech Memo #2. She then expanded on the Freeway Operations component of the memo.

Erin Ehlinger presented some of the challenges and opportunities for transportation operations in the MAG Region. Challenges include:

- Arterial capacity for localized diversions
- Signal operations
- Staffing

Some of the opportunities include:

- Arterial capacity for “regional” diversion
- Increasing diffusion of web-enabled devices
- Operational 511 System

Yogesh Mantri asked if the project scope includes the development of conceptual operations plans for Freeway-Arterial Management on specific routes. Sarath Joshua answered that while specific corridors or routes will not be identified, the project will be focused on the analysis of policies and procedures need to implement the conceptual operations plans on specific routes.

Pierre Pretorius noted that the Transportation Operations Manual that will be developed as part of the project could contain specific examples of operational concepts on specific routes.

Sarath Joshua mentioned that while arterials are available as alternate routes to freeways, current travel information on the arterials is inadequate. Sarath Joshua asked Erin Ehlinger if there was an urban area that would provide the best example for Phoenix to look at.

Bruce Dressel emphasized that it is important to recognize that staffing issues are a major concern to the cities. He emphasized that it would be valuable for him, as an employee of the City of Scottsdale, to have a document that clearly outlines the important issues, and what needs to be done to address them, that he could present to the City Council.

Pierre Pretorius responded by saying that part of the study will include an examination of specific institutional issues that need to be overcome in order to improve transportation operations in the MAG Region. Sarath Joshua clarified that a future task will clearly identify staffing and other resources required by local agencies to implement the RCTO.

Bruce Dresell stated that he would also like a document that specifically outlines the benefits of ITS to the community that he could present to decision makers.

Robert Maki emphasized that one of the critical elements to improving transportation operations is maintaining driver confidence. When a DMS advises a traveler to use an alternate route or to exit the freeway, the system operators need to be confident that his situation will improve. Otherwise, drivers will lose confidence in the system and will not respond to other messages or directions. In order to support his confidence level, adequate arterial surveillance is needed.

Erin Ehlinger summarized by stating that each city or municipality can do small things to improve the system instead of trying to solve all of the problems at once.

Jim Decker suggested that his focus is to get the systems we currently have to work during normal operations, which is about the 85% of the time. He agreed with Erin Ehlinger's statement that diversions are limited by right-and-left capacities at signals, and that this underscores that fact that strategies and policy issues can significantly improve operations. He stated that the focus should be on doing the things right that we need all of the time. After we have these issues in control, then we can focus on non-recurring events.

The observation was made that the things that people notice are the things that went wrong. The public sees the high-profile events and wrecks, and that is what they will complain about. Pierre Pretorius then asked the police and fire representatives if they were aware of things being done by other cities or states to improve incident management and the traffic related effects.

Pierre then concluded the discussion of Tech Memo #2 by asking that comments be submitted within two weeks.

Pierre Pretorius introduced the Performance Measures that will be expanded upon for Tech Memo #3. These include:

Mobility (ADOT)

- Average speed by time of day
- Average speed by route

Mobility (cities/county)

- Peak hour average travel speeds between regional centers
- % of cross-border traffic signals coordinated between cities

Safety

- Accident Rate
- Response time and clearance time for accidents

Accessibility

- Transit Service Coverage
- Transit Service Frequency

Maintenance and Reliability

- % of system uptime
- Average time to resume service if system failed

Multi-agency coordination

- Availability of center-to-center communications
- Availability of regional traffic operations agreements
- % of emergency vehicle preemption signals operating according to regionally established standard
- % of consistent and matching speed limits between cities for a given cross-section of road

Traveler Information Provision

- Usage
- Information quality

Yogesh Mantri noted that some of the measures are qualitative and some are quantitative. He stated that many of the qualitative measures are difficult to measure.

Sarath Joshua emphasized that Tech Memo #2 should specifically outline who will be collecting the data and the frequency of collection. Pierre Pretorius stated that the memo will contain a specific outline of roles and responsibilities of the city's, county, ADOT, and MAG with respect to the collection and processing of data.

An outline of the contents of Tech Memo #4 was presented. Pierre Pretorius noted that a workshop will be held in February with the purpose of discussing the recommendations for policies contained Tech Memo #4. The objective of this meeting will be to discuss in detail specific policies and procedures that will be contained in the Transportation Operations Manual.

4. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on January 8, 2003, at 10:30 a.m. A visit to Scottsdale has been tentatively planned for January 24th. This visit will be in conjunction with the Phoenix Open.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.